

THE MORNING NEWS

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Venezuela announces massive push to import food, goods

PORLAMAR (AFP) - Venezuela will massively boost its food and basic supplies imports in the next two months to counter shortages and high inflation, a minister said Wednesday.

Vice president for the economy Rafael Ramirez did not specify the products, or amount of goods, the country would purchase, as he spoke to reporters on the sidelines of the South American Oil and Gas Congress, at the country's top Caribbean resort Isla Margarita.

Ramirez, who is also minister of oil and mining, said a plan will soon be announced for Venezuela, which is highly dependent on basic commodity imports.

Since President Nicolas Maduro took office on April 19, Venezuela has seen a cyclical increase in shortages of sugar, coffee, oil, milk and toilet paper, among other

products.

Meanwhile, annual inflation in September soared to 49.4 percent, the highest in the past 13 years, according to official data.

Ramirez said that the government wouldn't exclude any supplier in its push to buy goods, even though Maduro holds that food shortages are part of an opposition conspiracy to foment protests.

The president announced Monday that Venezuela had reached an agreement with Brazil over the importation of food, mainly soybeans, corn and meat. In September, the country bought \$600 million in various products from Colombia next door.

Venezuela's agriculture minister said in September that the oil-rich OPEC country of 29 million imports 50 percent of its food.

International School of Aruba officially opens their World Languages and Arts Complex

ORANJESTAD - ISA Headmistress Sarah Putnam was pleased to welcome Aruba's Governor Fredis Refunjol and Prime Minister Mike Eman to share the ribbon cutting honors with her at the official opening of the World Languages and Arts Complex on Tuesday evening, October 22.

A number of island dignitaries attended the grand opening event, joined by the ISA Board Chair and President of International Schools Services, (ISS) Roger Hove. Principal Putnam cited the personal support of Mr. Hove and the ISS in making this humanities educational center a reality, as well as the concerted fundraising efforts of staff and the parents of the students.



Principal Putnam, PM and Governor cut the ribbon

Prime Minister Eman, when called to the podium, dwelled on the importance of such a complex. He affirmed his belief that development of creativity and artistic self-expression is just as important as more academic subjects, encouraging a happy, well-rounded community, insuring a better "quality of life." Ms. Putnam summed up the necessity of such a center by quoting Aristotle "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."

A number of parties involved in the completion of

this project, which broke ground less than one year ago, were called to the podium to say a few words. This included ISA NOB Advisory Board President Annette Boelen, who reiterated the importance of Dutch for island students who may go on to higher education in Holland. ISA PTA President Vanessa van der Veldt expressed the doubtful reaction when Ms. Putnam first proposed the project, and complimented the school's principal on her ideals and tenacity.

Continued on pg 4

Syria chemical disarmament on track but peace talks in doubt

DAMASCUS (AFP) - Syria is set to hand over a detailed plan for the destruction of its chemical arsenal by Thursday, days ahead of a UN deadline, the international watchdog said.

Continued on pg 6

Special Olympics Aruba Nation Games begin tomorrow evening



See story on pg 3



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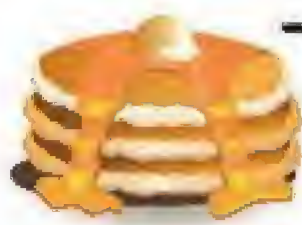
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Pastor Thomas



Pastor Thomas

By: Roland W. Peterson

For some years now, on and off, I have been observing the good work that "Pastor Elston Thomas," has been doing for the chollers and drug addicts on the whole island.

A few days ago he came by to make reservation for another Pastor of another island in the Caribbean. After the reservation was done to his satisfaction, he looked me straight in the eyes and said: "Mr. Peterson you got to help me."

What's the problem Father Thomas, as I always called him.

"Well as you know I am taking care of some drug addicts and chollers, but now I am in need of transportation. I need a car, so that I can pick them up and help them better. Can you help me with a second hand car." Knowing that transportation is crucial in the type of work that Father Thomas is involved in, I told him: "The cause is good, I will do my best to help you." He then told me that he knew



of a Van for Fls. 8,000.00 and that it looked good. I told him to test-drive the Van and if it is o.k. to get back to me. The following day Father Thomas informed me that the Van did not comply with his needs. He then told me that in his search, he found another car a S.U.V. for Fls. 5,000.00 and that the good Samaritan seller had dropped the price to Fls. 3,000.00. Again I told him to test-drive the SUV and then get back to me. The following day,

Father Thomas, informed me that the SUV was o.k. and that he would love to purchase it, but that his Ministry had no money. All the money was spent helping the chollers etc.

I then reconfirmed that I would help him.

Now it was my turn to put into motion my knowledge and contacts.

The first organization I

I also told him that there will always be those, who will find that this is not the task of the A.H. & S.F. to help.

Father Thomas is in his way, helping to combat crime on the whole island and getting drug addicts and chollers off the street is a modus of fighting crime also. Eliminating the cause is better than fighting the system.

Before I continue I would like to tell you more about Father Thomas, so I asked the Administrator and Coordinator of the A.H. & S.F. Mr. Dario F. Soemers, to visit the Pastor and interview him. This interview, I am adding "unchanged" to my article. This interview is, according to me, very touching and gives a good idea about Pastor Thomas, who he is and what he stands for.

"When I met Pastor Thomas, to hand him the cheque to buy the SUV, that he so needed to better his vocation, I had the pleasure to have a little conversation with him, and what I learned really "incentivized" (motivated) me more, to go and visit him and learn what he is doing, where he is coming from and what his aspirations (goals) are.

Continued on pg 5



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ORANJESTAD -- RBC Royal Bank announces that once again it will be part of EXPO CAS. The event is known for gathering the best information and deals regarding housing products and services under roof.

RBC is the place to turn when investing in a house, known as a staunch supporter of new projects and home improvements. This is why the bank is part of the EXPO CAS 2013, ready to offer the best rates for all those interested in improving their property or building a new one.

The EXPO CAS 2013 is this weekend, October 25, 26,

27 at the Renaissance Convention Center, and RBC will be there to offer superb deals on mortgages, home equity and personal loans, with exceptionally attractive interest rates such as 6.95% APR on mortgages, Finance home equity loans at 10.5% and find 16.5% APR on personal loans. Besides that, all those acquiring an approved loan automatically has the chance to win a monthly prize of AFls.1, 500 and the grand prize of AFls.2, 500 at the end of the year. So, do not hesitate, be sure to visit the RBC table at the EXPO CAS 2013.

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Special Olympics Aruba Nation Games begin tomorrow evening



ORANJESTAD -- Friday, October 25, the Aruba Special Olympics Committee will begin the annual national games, through the Sunday, the 27th, Committee President Arturo Werleman and National Director Karel Williams announced the opening ceremony will feature a rousing display of athletic prowess and dance and musical talent. It will take place at the Guillermo Trinidad Stadium in Oranjestad.

The annual national games are an important part of the qualifying process for participation in the Special

Olympics World Games, which will take place end of the July, 2015, in Los Angeles, California. Aruba plans to send a delegation to the games, as they have done for



the past ten years, and only those who compete in the national games can qualify.

The weekend's activities are taking place through the gracious support of Digicel, official sponsors of Aruba's

special athletes. The opening ceremonies will include the classic torch run, followed by events in track and field.

Saturday's competitions will begin at 8:00 AM with soccer matches at the

Guillermo Trinidad Stadium. Simultaneously, badminton contests will be conducted at the SVGA Gymnasium in Piedra Plat. The afternoon will be taken up with bowling at Eagle

Bowling Palace.

Sunday will open with a swimming at the San Nicolas Pool from 8:00 AM until noon and the day will end with the Bocce Ball tournament on the SVGA gymnasium grounds followed by the awards ceremony beginning at 4:00 PM.

Parents, friends, and all the community are urged to attend as spectators and cheer on their special athletes. Community support encourages them as they strive to qualify to represent their island at the World Games in 2015. The international event draws over 7,000 special athletes from 135 nations to compete in an environment of "Yes, I can!" while providing them with attitudes that allow them to mainstream into society.

Mr. Werleman and Williams, along with Elaine Singh of Digicel, expressed they look forward to the community's support and participation during the coming weekend.

By Rosalie Klein



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International School of Aruba officially opens their World Languages and Arts Complex

Continued from pg 1



Visual and Performing Arts staff



NOB Advisory Board President Annett Boelen



Governor, Roger Hove of ISS and PM Eman



Donation to Aruba Autism Foundation



PTA President Vanessa van der Veldt

Visual and Performing Arts teachers Anita van der Sloot and John Douglas also expressed their extreme satisfaction for the quality of humanities education they could now deliver to their stu-

dents.

Various individuals were recognized for their assistance in the completion of the project, in particular, Reint J. Roossien, for whom the new conference room is named, and major contributors Richard and Milly Lacle, the namesake of the Richard Lacle Visual & Performing Arts Wing.

Ms. Putnam closed the opening ceremonies by apologizing that the ISA does not yet have a program to address the learning disabled, but would hope to see one established, eventually. In recognition of this oversight, they had reached an agreement with the Aruba Autism Foundation (FAA) to donate 10%



Major contributors Richard and Milly Lacle

of the proceeds from a fundraising raffle to the FAA. One of its co-founders, Dilma Arends-Geerman, received the check on behalf of the FAA.

By Rosalie Klein

October 30th is deadline to submit personnel registry to DAO

DAO (Department of Labor) has issued a bulletin informing all that the date to submit the Jobs List has been extended for two weeks and that the deadline for submitting said list is now October 30th. The Labor Law 2013 (AB 2013 no.14) has taken effect as of April 2013. The application of article 28, paragraph 1 of the Labor Law regulates the model and obligation of business owners to submit a list of all employees to the Department of Labor and Investigation (DAO) for their control.

All persons active in the labor market must fill out and submit a model of a jobs list. On this list one must fill in actual job hours. All information must be correctly filled in. The original version must be submitted together with an extract of the Chamber of Commerce to DAO. The Chamber's extract may not be older than three months. The model list for DAO may be obtained online at www.overheid.aw or www.gobierno.aw. A copy may also be picked up at the

offices of DAO. Those desiring a digital copy may request same by notifying DAO of their email address. Direct this petition to simon.brete@aruba.gov.aw or to arbeidsmarktonderzoek@hotmail.aw.

After DAO's control the business owner will receive a copy of the list with DAO's stamp before December 30th. This is DAO's proof of having controlled the list. In the event of necessary corrections or adaptations DAO will contact the person in charge.

For additional information please contact DAO at telephone 583-7720 and request the Bureau Arbeidsmarktonderzoek.

Remember that the deadline date to submit your employees' list is also October 30th. This list may be submitted with the above list at the offices of DAO at the L.G. Smith Blvd 134 (third floor). Or, in San Nicolas at DAO's affiliate office. Office hours are Monday to Fridays from 8 to 12 and from 1:00 to 4:00pm.

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Pastor Thomas

Continued from pg 2

I went to his little Tabernacle and he also took me to his home where he introduced me to five children he and his wife are taking care of, children ranging from 12 to 15 years old, who come from families where the parents are drug addicts and are not able to look after these kids. He has been looking after these kids for years, where the oldest one since her 1st. year, thus already for 14 years, and which kid is now going to the MAVO school. In the weekends he arranges for them to see the parents, if they are fit to see the children.

Proud as could be, he showed me the SUV he has been able to buy with the help from the A.H. & S.F. and which he will use to help the addicts he is looking after, for as far as his resources allow him to do so.

When asked, why he was doing this, he told me his life story.

He grew up in a family of 13 children where his mother was a devoted Evangelist and his father an alcoholic, who painted to provide for his family.

They grew up in very poor conditions and at the age of ten his father, as a joke, had him taste rum, which he happened to like and whenever he had an opportunity he would chase his father's empty bottles, to drink whatever was left in them.

At 13 years old he was introduced to Marijuana and at 15 he was chased from home, being a fully fledged addict, who from that moment on had to survive partially on the streets and in prison. By the age 18 he was totally on the ground, staying sometimes more than a year without a bath and living in a condition we know as a choler on the streets of Curacao.

One day, when he was 25 years old, he was approached by two Christian twin brothers who woke him up from the street, took him to their house, prayed with him and introduced him to God. It took him almost two years to recover and kick his addiction and since he could not write nor read, and having a criminal history was unable to get a job, he stayed with the church and became a pastor. He later met his wife in Aruba, when he came to preach. After he learned to read and write, he went on to graduate as a pastor in Jamaica. He always had a passion to help addicts on the street and has been doing so since he was converted at the age of 26, and that is 26 years ago.

One of the addicts who he helped to recover in Aruba, and whom he actually saved his life, out of gratefulness gave him a piece of land, where he, with the help of neighbors and church-goers' built his current Tabernacle. The wood used for this, he had received as a gift from CEDE-Aruba.

As a Pastor, he has helped more than a 100 addicts. Minister Watty Vos, Rip, then the Minister of Justice in Aruba, sent him to New York in 1997, where he graduated in helping addicts off chemical substances. He is also a "Drug Psychologist."

All this work he is doing, he is doing it without one cent help from any Government instance.

With donations from his congregation of about 40 followers, fund-raising events, BBQ-sales, free clothing from department stores, etc. he is helping about 30 addicts at the moment. He brings them food every Saturday and if the funds allow, also on Wednesdays. He takes them to Baby Beach, where he has them take a bath and also a shave about once a month. He is also providing them with clean clothes which he receives from several Department Stores.

Now that he has the SUV, he has better transportation to look after his flock.

The above is just a nutshell of what this exceptional man does. I truly believe that by helping him, we should be better able to look at ourselves in the mirror, and Roland, I appreciate you, for putting this ball into motion.

Things he needs most, on short term, is some money to be able to insure the SUV and pay for the road taxes.

He could also use a little stove and fridge to replace the dilapidated ones in his Tabernacle.

In the photo's, which I took you can see that the Tabernacle also is in need of some LTC.


I hope this brief article gives you an overview of the good work Pastor Thomas is doing for the community.

Addicts live on the street and only have one purpose in life and that is to get their daily shots.

This cost them money and the only way they can get this money is through either begging or stealing. The higher the urge and the less money they get from begging the higher the incidents of crime they commit against our community and tourist. This is a big problem and it is on the rise."

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Zandstraat open again for motor traffic



ORANJESTAD – MAMBO, the main street merchant association, announced that Zandstraat, the street between Djispi's and Botica Oduber,

which feeds from the Emanstraat into Caya Betico Croes, is open again for traffic. The street was closed as part of the reconstruction and

beautification project of the main street.

Traffic heading east out of Oranjestad can now flow normally, with entrance adjacent to the old hospital building in the direction of Djispi's. Traffic on Caya Betico Croes can access the turnaround at Botica Oduber or continue straight to Lacle Boulevard and the Valero Main Street.

After a long waiting period, the main street merchants are very happy that the traffic flow is open to clients again, thus making shopping in the main street more accessible.

There are still a few minor details, sidewalks and pavers still to be installed, but soon the main street will be completely finished, offering pleasant shopping opportunities and much more attractive surroundings.



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Syria chemical disarmament on track but peace talks in doubt

Continued from pg 1

But prospects for a peace conference, which the world body is trying to convene in parallel with the disarmament process, looked dim after key opposition leaders spurned efforts by Western and Arab powers to persuade them to attend.

And on the ground violence raged unabated, with a rebel attack on a gas pipeline causing power outages across Syria and a deadly car bombing and shelling hitting Damascus.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said on Wednesday that the Syrian government was expected to hand over its disarmament plan within the next 24 hours.

The plan is the next step for Damascus under the terms of a US-Russian deal to head off military strikes on Syria which calls for all its chemical weapons and production facilities to be destroyed by mid-2014.

"We expect Syria's initial declaration of its chemical weapons programme within the next 24 hours," spokesman Michael Luhan told reporters in The Hague, where the OPCW is based.

President Bashar al-Assad's regime has already handed over an inventory of its chemicals, weapons and facilities, and a joint UN-OPCW team has been in Syria since the start of the month inspecting and destroying them.

The team has now checked 18 of 23 declared sites in Syria, destroying production equipment at almost all of them, Luhan said.

But parallel efforts by the United Nations to convene a peace conference in Geneva next month have run into resistance from the opposition, who are insisting on a raft of preconditions.

Leaders of the National Coalition -- the main opposition umbrella group -- insisted they will not attend unless regime change and Assad's departure are on the table.

A meeting in London Tuesday between opposition lead-

ers and 11 governments from the Friends of Syria group produced little more than a joint statement that Assad should play no future role in government.

Damascus retorted on Wednesday that no foreign party could be involved in deciding the country's leadership.

"The Syrian people will not allow any foreign party to impose itself ... in choosing a government, or in determining its powers and tasks," the foreign ministry said.

It said the government was ready to attend the planned Geneva conference to "try its best to ensure its success without any preconditions or any foreign intervention."

'No negotiations if Assad departure not on table'

The opposition is due to meet at the start of November to finalise its position on the Geneva talks.

But Coalition head Ahmad Jarba showed no signs of readiness to compromise.

"The only thing we are willing to negotiate is a transfer of all power and then the departure of the mass killer (Assad)," he said.

Obama reassures Pakistan on Afghanistan, not drones

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama on Wednesday promised to consider Pakistan's concerns in post-war Afghanistan, but stayed mum on a call by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to end drone strikes.

Obama welcomed Sharif to the White House after releasing \$1.6 billion in aid -- mostly for the military -- that had been blocked amid high tensions over the 2011 raid that killed Osama bin Laden.

With US forces preparing to pull out of Afghanistan next year, Obama pledged to brief Sharif fully and to work toward an Afghanistan that is "stable and secure, its sovereignty respected."

"I'm confident that, working together, we can achieve a goal that is good for Afghanistan, but also helps to protect Pakistan over the long term," Obama told reporters at the Oval Office.

Many Afghans view Pakistan suspiciously due to its past support for the Taliban regime, which was toppled in the US-led invasion that followed the September 11, 2001 attacks.

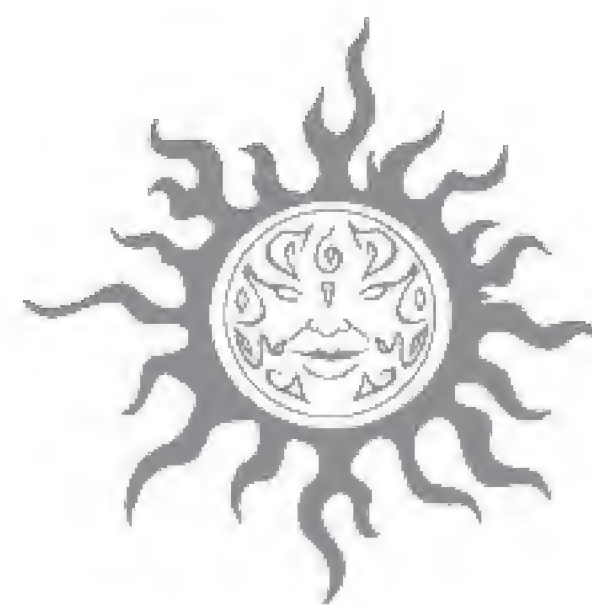
In a joint statement, the two leaders came together to urge the Taliban "to join the political process and enter into dialogue with the Afghan government."

But on a discordant note, Sharif urged an end to the US

campaign of drone strikes against extremists which have infuriated many Pakistanis who see them as a violation of the country's sovereignty.

Calling for greater counter-terrorism cooperation with Washington, Sharif said: "I also brought up the issue of drones in our meeting, emphasizing the need for an end to such strikes."

Obama did mention drones and the two leaders did not take questions. In their statement, Obama and Sharif "stressed that our enduring partnership is based on the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity."



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Microsoft unfazed by 'lightweight' Apple software

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Microsoft on Wednesday brushed off Apple's move to give away its software, claiming the iWork productivity suite from its rival was "lightweight" and "has never gotten much traction."

The reaction came a day after Apple unveiled its new line of iPads and announced much of its software and upgrades would be free, including iWork, which competes with Microsoft's top-selling Office suite.

"Since iWork has never gotten much traction, and was already priced like an afterthought, it's hardly that surprising or significant a move," Microsoft corporate vice president Frank Shaw said on the company's corporate blog.

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International News

Dutch fury over UN body's 'Black Pete' racism charge

THE HAGUE (AFP) - A Facebook petition supporting a Dutch Christmas character called "Black Pete" on Wednesday hit a million 'likes', revealing the liberal nation's attachment to a beloved figure the UN has warned may be racist.

Anger over the issue has swept the Netherlands after a UN human rights body said it was assessing whether "Zwarte Piet", who accompanies Saint Nicholas during a traditional children's festival before Christmas, is racist.

The character, who arrives on a gift-filled boat from Spain, is typically decked out in a gaudy medieval costume and afro wig, with his face painted black and lips red, prompting criticism of racial stereotyping.

Opponents say the character recalls when Dutch colonists exploited slaves, notably in the Caribbean colonies of Suriname and Curacao, while supporters are offended at the suggestion that a character so central to Dutch culture could be racist.

The debate comes up every year, but now it is particularly bitter after the Jamaican chair of a committee at the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Verene Shepherd, bluntly told Dutch television that "the practice must stop".

"The working group cannot understand that why it is that people in the Netherlands cannot see that this is a throwback to slavery and that in the 21st century this practice should stop," she told the Eenvandaag show on Tuesday.

Her Geneva-based committee at the UNHCHR sent a letter to the Dutch government after they heard that "the character and image of Black Pete perpetuate a stereotyped image of African people and people of African descent as second-class citizens" and asked for further information, Dutch media reported last week.

The Dutch give each other gifts, allegedly distributed by

Saint Nicholas -- a Turkish bishop wearing a long red gown and mitre who resembles Father Christmas -- and Black Pete, on December 5 and then also celebrate Christmas on December 24-25, but without gifts.

Shepherd angered the Dutch further by suggesting they should adopt a US-style "Santa Claus" instead.

"What is wrong with one Santa Claus, why do you have to have two Santa Clauses?" said Shepherd, who is due in the Netherlands next month to witness the arrival of Saint Nicholas and Black Pete firsthand.

The Dutch are also divided on the issue, whatever colour they might be, but there's near-universal agreement that those who do not understand Dutch culture should not get involved in the thorny debate.

"Black Pete is a chimney sweep and Saint Nicholas is a Turk and they live together in Spain and that's what we celebrate in the Netherlands - it's just the best integration party ever!" said one Facebook commentator.

"Note to UN: isn't there a war or famine or genocide going on somewhere where you could better bring your pressure to bare (sic)?" said another one of the 1,033,669 'likes' garnered in less than 24 hours.

A Dutch Facebook page called "Black Pete is racism" had 7,166 'likes' at the same time.

Amsterdam city hall held a public hearing last week during which 21 complaints about Black Pete were filed, calling on the Dutch capital to revoke the permit for this year's festival.

Mayor Eberhard van der Laan is to rule on the permit in early November.

But supporters called for the Saint Nicholas festival to go ahead, arguing that it has been part of a Dutch tradition as far back as the 16th century, with the Black Petes first appearing around the 1850s.

Russia drops piracy charges against Greenpeace crew

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russia said Wednesday it had reduced piracy charges against 30 Greenpeace activists detained at sea while protesting against Arctic drilling, to the lesser count of "hooliganism".

The Investigative Committee, the Russian agency in charge of probing serious crimes, said it had "taken the decision to reclassify the crime as hooliganism".

The crew of Greenpeace's Arctic Sunrise ship, who come from 18 countries including Britain, Australia, Spain and Russia, had been facing up to 15 years in a penal colony if found guilty of piracy.

The new charge carries a maximum sentence of seven years in a penal colony.

Greenpeace on Wednesday said the hooliganism charge was still "wildly disproportionate" and called for its activists to be immediately released.

Russia charged the crew of the Dutch-flagged ship with piracy early this month after they attempted to scale a state-owned oil platform in a protest against drilling in the Arctic.

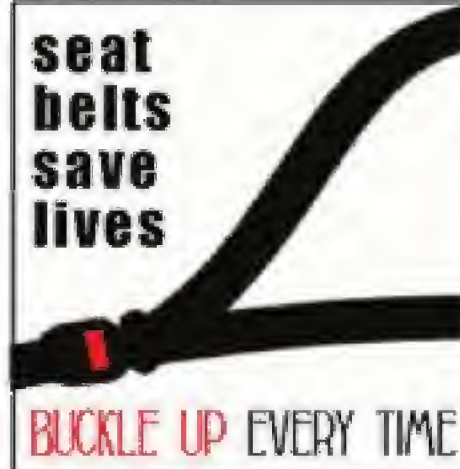
They are being held in pre-trial detention until November 24 in the northern Russian region of Murmansk.

The piracy charge attracted international criticism with stars such as British actor Jude Law joining vigils outside Russian embassies.

The Netherlands has taken Russia to the world's maritime court in order to free the crew members, but Moscow said earlier Wednesday it would boycott the hearings before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).

Vladimir Chuprov of Greenpeace's Russian office said in a statement sent to AFP the activists "should be released immediately."

"The Arctic 30 protested peacefully against Gazprom's dangerous oil drilling and should be free."

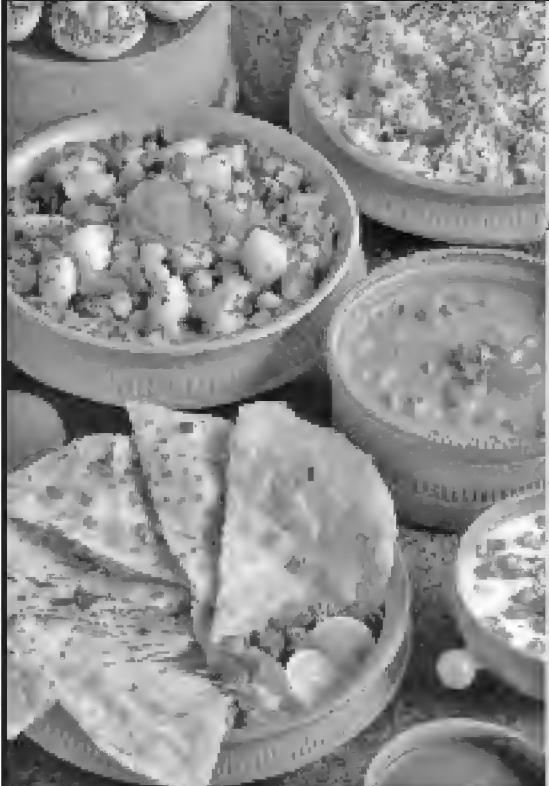


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Obama tells Merkel US not monitoring her communications: spokesman



WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama Wednesday assured German Chancellor Angela Merkel the United States is not monitoring her communications, but the White House did not deny reports US spies eavesdropped on her cellphone in the past.

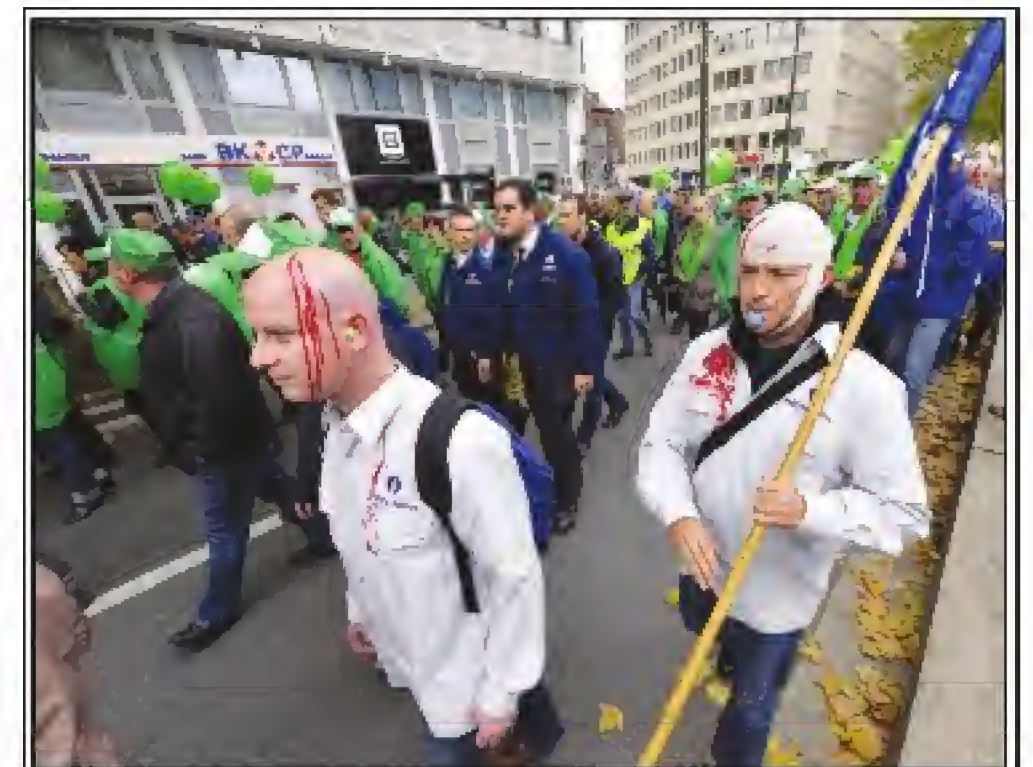
The latest embarrassing revelations of activity by the US National Security Agency (NSA) threatened the trust and close cooperation between Obama and Merkel.

The US president considers the newly reelected German leader as one of his closest al-

lies and friends on the world stage and has frequently spoken of his respect for her.

Earlier, Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said that the chancellor called Obama to say she "unequivocally disapproves of such practices, should they be confirmed, and regards them as completely unacceptable."

The reports, based on information provided by fugitive US intelligence analyst Edward Snowden, made Merkel the latest foreign leader to face claims their communications had been intercepted by the secretive NSA.



BELGIUM (AFP) - Police officers demonstrate yesterday in Brussels to protest against violence endured by the police. The Belgian police threaten to go on strike on October 29.

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Health & Living

Tuberculosis killed 1.3 million last year: WHO

GENEVA (AFP) - Tuberculosis claimed 1.3 million lives last year with drug-resistant forms of the infectious disease -- the deadliest after AIDS -- a huge global concern, the WHO warned Wednesday.

Worldwide efforts to rein in the killer airborne disease helped drive the toll down 100,000 from the previous year, the World Health Organization said in its annual report on the fight against TB.

But the toll remains the world's second-highest for an infectious disease, after HIV/AIDS.

An estimated 8.6 million people caught tuberculosis in 2012, with India alone ac-

counting for 26 percent of cases, and China, 12 percent.

According to the WHO, close to one-third of TB cases were in Southeast Asia, just over a quarter in Africa and around one-fifth on the Western Pacific region.

Looking at the longer-term picture, the number of infections fell by nearly half from 1990 to 2012.

But experts reckon only two-thirds of last year's 8.6 million new cases were actually diagnosed, leaving an estimated three million people unaware they had the disease.

Those most at risk are typically among the worst-off groups of the population, the report said.

"To find the three million TB cases means we need to reach beyond the current health services, we need to look at where these cases are," WHO expert Karin Meyer told reporters.

Global health experts also warned of the growing threat posed by a strain of TB that resists drugs used to fight the classic form.

Multidrug-resistant TB, or MDR-TB, which emerged due to erratic treatment of the regular strain or excessive use of anti-TB medication, claimed 170,000 lives last year, the WHO said.

Some 94,000 people were diagnosed with MDR-TB last

year, twice the figure in 2011.

But the true number of cases is thought to be around five times higher, the WHO added.

'A real public health crisis'

The highest density of MDR-TB cases is found in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Those are places where TB programmes have long been in place, but where failings in health services have allowed drug-resistance to build up, officials said.

In contrast, Africa has seen lower levels of MDR-TB, in part because of weaker access to standard TB treatment in the past.

Other countries hit hard by MDR-TB include China and India.

The standard drugs used to treat TB are isoniazid and rifampicin. Vaccines are in development, but are not expected to hit the market before 2025, the WHO said.

MDR-TB is able to ward off both isoniazid and rifampicin.

It can be treated with bedaquiline, which came onto the market at the end of last year and is the first new TB drug in four decades.

The WHO said it needed to bridge a \$2 billion annual gap in order to meet its overall requirement of up to \$8 billion a year to fight the disease in low and middle-income countries.



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Sci-Tech

Australian scientists strike gold in gum trees

SYDNEY (AFP) - Australian researchers have found tiny particles of gold hidden inside the leaves of eucalyptus trees, in a discovery they say could help prospectors discover new deposits of the precious metal.

Scientists from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) made the find in the resource-rich Kalgoorlie region of Western Australia, which was the site of a major gold rush in the late 1800s.

Geochemist Mel Lintern said it appeared the trees sucked up the gold particles from 30 metres (100 feet) below the ground through their roots.

In research published Wednesday in the journal *Nature Communications*, the CSIRO said the leaf particles themselves would not trigger a new gold rush as they measure just a fifth the width of a human hair and are visible only through advanced X-ray imaging.

But scientists could use a technique known as "biogeochemical sampling" to give an indication of the presence of gold beneath the surface.

"By sampling and analysing vegetation for traces of minerals, we may get an idea of what's happening below the surface without the need to drill," Lintern said.

"It's a more targeted way of searching for minerals that reduces costs and impact on the environment."

He said the method could also be used to find other metals such as zinc and copper.

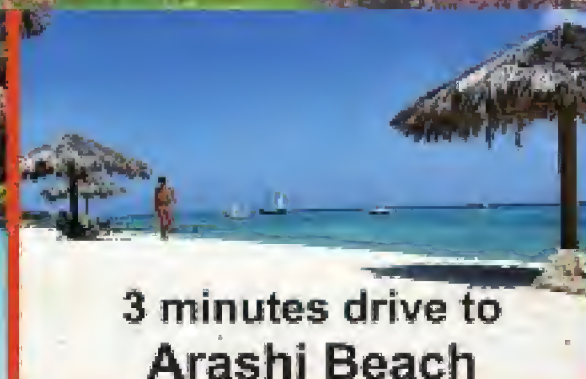
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Dutch pensioner spared jail for helping mother to die

THE HAGUE (AFP) - A Dutch court on Tuesday spared an elderly man from jail for helping his 99-year-old mother commit suicide five years ago, on the grounds he acted "out of love".

The case of Albert Heringa, 77, shot to national attention following a documentary about his mother's 2008 suicide, broadcast in 2010.

The film showed his mother Maria telling her granddaughter "my life is complete", before swallowing

a deadly cocktail of pills provided by her son.

As it announced its decision, the court in eastern Zutphen called for renewed debate about euthanasia, which has been legal in The Netherlands since 2002 but only under tight conditions.

The court ruled that Heringa was guilty of "assisting a suicide", a crime that carries a maximum three-year sentence or an 18,500 euro (\$25,000) fine.

It added that Heringa "de-

liberately chose not to abide by the rules."

"But given the fact that the court is satisfied that he acted out of love for his mother, he will not be punished," it said in a statement.

Prosecutors had asked for a three month suspended sentence against Heringa.

The Netherlands and Belgium were the first two countries to legalise euthanasia over a decade ago.

Yearly around 3,300 people die by euthanasia in The

Netherlands, a pro-mercy killing group said last year.

Strict criteria exist in Dutch law for patients who request assisted suicides.

Patients must be fully mentally alert when asking to die. Families cannot request a mercy killing for relatives unable to do so.

A doctor, who has to agree to perform the procedure, must get a second opinion from a colleague who in turn has to agree that the patient's illness was in a terminal

stage.

Assisted suicide is then performed by infusion or injection of a sleep inducing drug, followed by a barbiturate to stop the patient's heart and breathing.

"This judgement comes at a time of medical advances and longer life-spans in which many people worry about their independence, maintaining their identity and quality of life," the court said.

"A social debate is needed on the issue," it added.

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ACROSS

1. Dismantle
5. FDR's pup
9. Switch positions
12. Bird sound
13. Sad news item, for short
14. Sticky mess
15. Clairvoyant person
16. Shown
18. Flying hero
20. Canvas holders
21. Song of praise
24. Concorde's inits.
25. Scrooge's cry

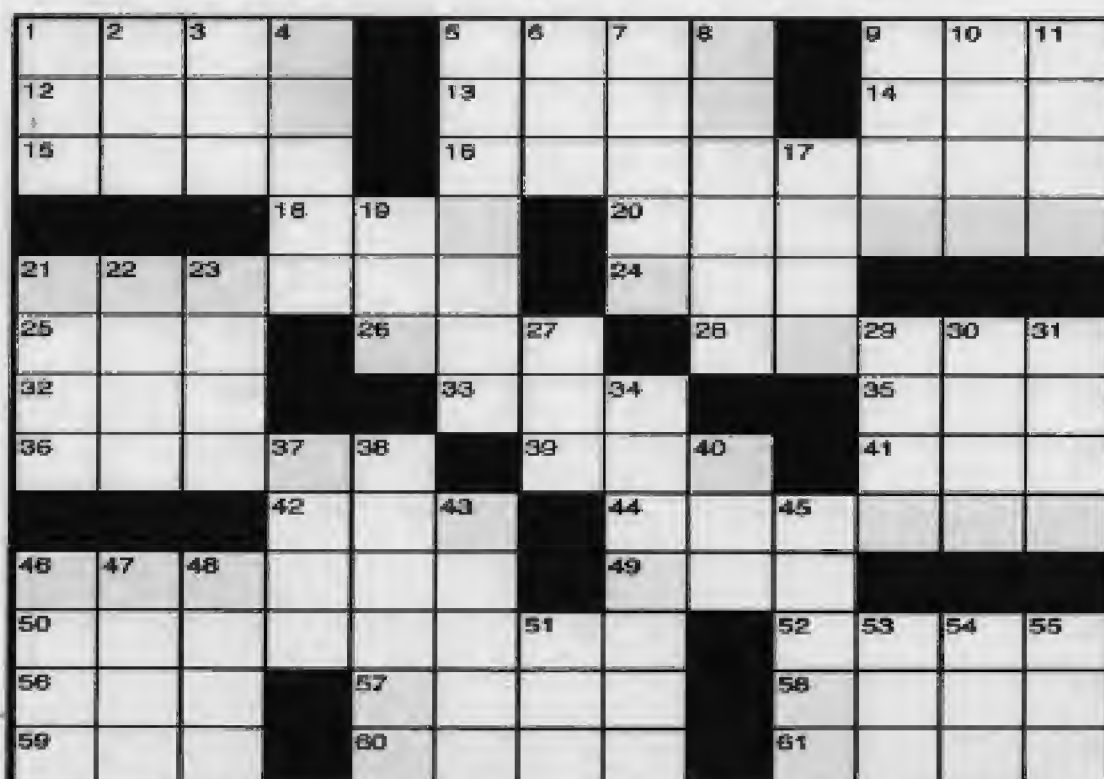
26. Writer Wallace
28. Titled Englishmen
32. Busy bee at tax time (abbr.)
33. Likewise not
35. "Yes" vote
36. Dungaree fabric
39. Korean car company
41. Ted Turner's channel, for short
42. In vogue
44. Customer, to a lawyer
46. Persian or Ottoman
49. That girl
50. Underwater cadge
52. Scratch's target

56. "See you later!"
57. Asian land
58. False
59. "Help!"
60. Brownstone's mail mouth
61. Vagabond

DOWN

1. Elevator directions
2. Maiden name indicator
3. "Fiddle-de-___!"
4. Humanitarian Winfrey
5. Factory bosses
6. Lincoln, for short
7. Biographies
8. Relaxed (2 wds.)

9. Amorous glance
10. Christmas song
11. Repairs lawns
17. Four-legged star of the '30s
19. Animation collectible
21. First four letters
22. Neck region
23. Comparative word
27. Stir-fry skillet
29. Runner's competition
30. Country singer Loretta
31. Emitted
34. Having the most money
37. "Baby, ___ Love" (2 wds.)
38. Ethics
40. Lager alternative
43. Transferable picture
45. From Limerick
46. Wanes
47. The ___ Clinic
48. Obama's title (abbr.)
51. Bathroom, to a Brit
53. Conjunction, for short
54. Bandleader Calloway
55. PPO alternative



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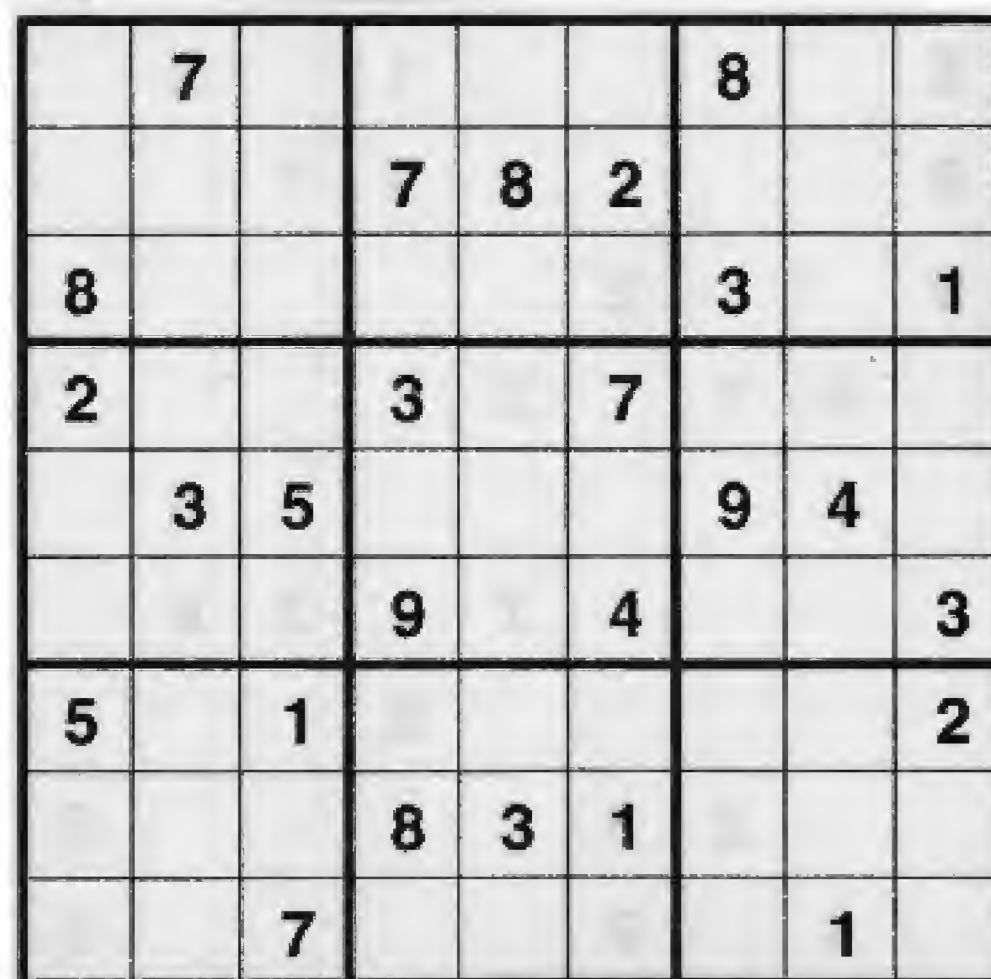
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| 7 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 6 |
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Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Seven Dutch banks on European central bank review list

THE HAGUE - Seven Dutch banks are on the list of 130 banks which the European central bank plans to check out over the next few months.

The Dutch banks are state-owned ABN Amro and SNS, ING, cooperative bank Rabobank, the local authority bank BNG, the waterboard bank Nederlandse Waterschapsbank and Royal Bank of Scotland NV.

The banks have been singled out for an 'asset quality review' followed by a 'stress test'.

The exercise has three main goals: transparency – to enhance the quality of information available on the condition of banks; repair – to identify and implement necessary corrective actions, if and where needed; and confidence building – to assure all stakeholders that banks are fundamentally sound and trustworthy, the central bank said in a statement.

The information will give the central bank an overview of eurozone banking ahead of it taking over banking supervision in November 2014.

Dollar stabilizes after sharp fall; yuan pushes higher

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US dollar stabilized Wednesday after sinking since last week against the euro on expectations of the Federal Reserve keeping its stimulus program in place possibly until next year.

But the most significant move in the foreign exchange market was in China's closely-controlled yuan, which continued its week-old climb to its highest point ever against the greenback.

At 2200 GMT, the euro was at \$1.3775, down slightly from \$1.3780 late Tuesday.

The dollar slipped on the Japanese currency, falling to 97.32 yen from 98.12 yen, but gained on the British pound, the pound trading to \$1.6164 from \$1.6234 a day earlier.

The euro also fell on the yen, to 134.10 yen from 135.23.

Kathy Lien of BK Asset Management said both the dollar and the yen were bid up as safe havens after news that Chinese bank bad loan write-offs tripled in the first half of the year.

"Investors are looking at the increase as a big red flag for Asia's largest economy and while it reveals some of the country's deeper problems, the write-offs are also part of the new government's overall strategy to clean up their books and bring default ratios to international standards," she said.

Independent of that is the Chinese currency's move: the yuan, or renminbi, was up 0.2 percent for the day, moving to 6.083 yuan per dollar, and has moved nearly 0.7 percent since October 13, after holding steady since May.

A year ago it was at 6.25 per dollar.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

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FINANCE

US jury rules against Bank of America in mortgage case

NEW YORK CITY (AFP) - A federal jury Wednesday concluded that Bank of America defrauded mortgage finance firms Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac with a lending program that fast-tracked mortgages ahead of the housing bust.

The jury's ruling sets Bank of America on course for a federal civil penalty to be determined by US District Judge Jed Rakoff.

The lending program was created by Countrywide, once a giant in subprime mortgages, prior to its 2008 acquisition by Bank of America.

The Justice Department alleged that Countrywide created the so-called "Hustle" program in 2007 as government-backed Freddie and Fannie were tightening their underwriting guidelines and loan purchase requirements in response to rising loan de-

faults.

Countrywide allegedly eliminated key checkpoints on loan quality and compensated employees solely based on loan volumes, leading to "rampant instances of fraud" while Countrywide informed the loan-finance firms that it tightened requirements, the Justice Department said in court papers.

US Attorney Preet Bharara praised Wednesday's verdict.

"In this case, Bank of America chose to defend Countrywide's conduct with all its might and money, claiming there was no case here. The jury disagreed," Bharara said in a statement.

"This office will never hesitate to go to trial to expose fraudulent corporate conduct and to hold companies accountable, particularly when it has caused such harm to the

public."

Bank of America, which denied that it engaged in fraud, said it was considering an appeal.

"The jury's decision concerned a single Countrywide program that lasted several months and ended before Bank of America's acquisition of the company," said a Bank of America spokesman. "We will evaluate our options for appeal."

The verdict comes as the US continues to press ahead with litigation against giant banks over their handling of mortgages and mortgage-backed securities ahead of the 2008 financial crisis.

The Justice Department and JPMorgan Chase are currently in negotiations over a multi-billion settlement over mortgage-backed securities from this period.

IMF says Brazil needs investment, competitive boost

BRASÍLIA (AFP) - Looking at the long term growth forecast, the IMF said in its annual assessment of a country whose government is trying to lift growth through tax breaks and other incentives.

The country also hopes for a massive boost to the economy when it hosts next summer's World Cup, which will bring in an estimated 600,000 foreign tourists.

"Brazil could achieve long-run potential growth of about 3.5 percent, although this estimate is subject to significant uncertainty and assumes a sustained pick-up in infrastructure

investment."

The IMF added Brazil had to strive to improve productivity, competitiveness and investment to lift growth above a 2013 forecast of just 2.5 percent -- though that followed on from an anemic 0.9 percent in 2012.

Against a backdrop of the global economic crisis, the IMF also worried about a potential propensity to import more, slowing growth short term.

While saluting "the expansion of the middle class (which) has been one of Brazil's success stories over the last decade ... a testament to macroeconomic

stability and growth" the IMF lamented rising demand imbalances and lower saving.

"Consumption has become the dominant demand-side driver of growth while investment and net exports have weakened."

And the organization also warned against an overheating of mortgage debt, seeing "some risk" meriting continual vigilance.

The IMF praised Brazil's recent inflation record saying that "since 1999, price stability has been achieved and policy credibility has accumulated."

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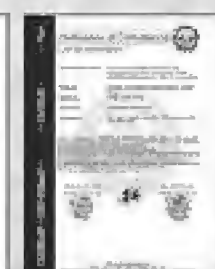
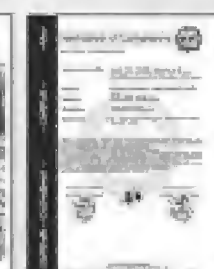
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Exclusive interview with **GEORGE CLOONEY** by **THE MORNING NEWS Special Correspondent to Hollywood,** **Noel de Souza**



George Clooney as veteran astronaut in Gravity 2

-- He's suave, he's handsome and he's reminds you of the real stars of yesteryear, like Cary Grant and Tyron Power. "I can't think of any star today that has the presence that Clooney has," asserts Morning News' Hollywood Correspondent Noel de Souza. "In spite of this, he does not seem to take himself too seriously and displays a great sense of humor, which is some times self effacing. But above all he has an endearing charisma and an open friendliness." Clooney is currently starring in "Gravity" with Sandra Bullock, in what is, for the most part, actually a supporting role, but reviewers term as "scene-stealing at its best." Gravity is now playing in local theaters in 3D, and critics have unanimously described it as "breathtaking; this is how 3D technology was meant to be used."

NDS: YOUR ROLE IN 'GRAVITY' IS NOT VERY BIG. DOES THAT MEAN AS YOU ARE GETTING OLDER, YOU WANT TO SEE YOURSELF LESS AND LESS ON THE SCREEN?

GC: I've been around the acting profession for a long time; I've done a bunch of films and hundreds of episodes of television. Now I'm really interested in writing and directing. I've had some success in it and I like it. And I have things that I want to say and do, and it's infinitely more creative than just acting. I'm getting grayer and older and I start looking at myself and thinking well there's a point when people aren't going to really want to see you, and you sort of have to beat them to the punch. You don't want to be the last guy at the party with all the toys, going "Where did everyone go?" You want to be ahead of the curve and not behind it. I'd rather be directing and writing and picking the parts when they are right. And this is what I've been trying to

do more and more.

NDS: GEORGE, YOU ARE KNOWN FOR YOUR OPENNESS WITH THE PRESS AND SOME TIMES YOUR JOKES ARE MISINTERPRETED, HAVE YOU ANY PLANS TO CENSOR YOURSELF?

GC: I'm not going to censor my life. I still enjoy life. I come here and talk to you, I don't worry about it because I figure you and I are working on this stuff together. We enjoy what we do and when other people outside of this room screw with it, then they do and there's nothing I can do. It's nothing that I can control, so we'll have fun and not worry about what they say. I can't worry about what everybody says, not anymore. I could answer everything carefully and it could still get distilled down to whatever and if I complain, it'll be like George is complaining about the press. So there's nothing you can do about it.

NDS: DOES GEORGE CLOONEY HAVE ANY VICES?

GC: I'll tell you. My vices are if I'm given the opportunity I can sit in front of a television with a remote in my hand all day, literally just watching absolutely mindless crap. I don't sleep very much, I wish I slept more, I have tons of other vices, I don't necessarily want to point them out because then you'll start pointing them out and then I'll feel really bad about myself.

NDS: HOW MANY CARS AND MOTORCYCLES DO YOU HAVE?

GC: Well, in Los Angeles I have two cars and two motorcycles and in Italy I have three motorcycles because other people want to ride them. I also have a couple of cars there. You know, it's funny when you are young you're into sports cars and shit like that. It really does matter. You

go, like, "this is cool." When I'm in Italy I pull up to the Villa d'Este Hotel in a minivan. You go, "I lost all my cool." You sort of just want transportation after awhile and a lot of times things like really cool cars or cool motorcycles are about getting attention, and I get all the attention I could ever need. Now I kind of like being in a minivan and no one

paying attention to me.

NDS: COULD YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE CARS AND MOTORCYCLES THAT YOU DRIVE?

GC: I have this Tesla, which is the electric car, which I drive some and not as much, as say the Lexus Hybrid - you know, the "normal car. I have Harleys, I like Harleys. I like riding slow, I'm not out to race anybody.

NDS: WHEN YOU ARE OUT ON YOUR MOTORCYCLE DO PEOPLE LEAVE YOU ALONE?

GC: They pretty much leave me alone in Italy but when I go out to some other areas away from my home base, they don't leave me alone. People pull up next to me going hundred and twenty miles an hour and say "Hi!" They pull in front of you, it's crazy.

NDS: BUT HOW DO THEY RECOGNIZE YOU IF YOU ARE WEARING A HELMET?

GC: I don't know.

NDS: ARE YOU WEARING A VANITY HELMET INSTEAD OF A TOTAL ONE?

GC: Yes, but it's not for vanity. The total one hurts my neck when I wear it all day. You sweat and it wouldn't be fun. You want to feel the wind in your face.

NDS: WHAT IS YOUR EXERCISE AND DIET REGIME, AND DOES IT CHANGE WHEN YOU ARE DIRECTING, BECAUSE THAT REQUIRES A DIFFERENT STAMINA THEN WHAT YOU REQUIRE WHEN ACTING?

GC: It's a funny thing, and you'll see it with most directors just before they start - they are working out like crazy. They are eating great, they are doing every thing right. For about the first week you kind of figure out "I'm going to get



end, which is important, because you want them to, even when they are not at the time. I had films like OUT OF SIGHT and THREE KINGS that really didn't do well, opened poorly, but they are really good films and will stand the test of time. Career-wise I'm very proud of some of the films that we were able to force to get made that studios and other people didn't want to make. I've certainly done some turkeys along the way, I've made some dumb choices, mostly early on in my career. I am one of the lucky ones who got to make a lot of mistakes when no one was really paying attention.

The thing I am most proud of was being involved in places and issues that when I have all this attention on me, I was able to deflect that attention onto Darfur and South Sudan. These were important parts of me because they couldn't get their voices heard, and it was easier for me and I couldn't get off the front of the camera. I'm always very proud of being able to deflect some of this too much of attention that I get, to deflect on to other people who could use it. The telethons and things like that we've been able to put together over the years. I am proud of those things because those feel like I was able to take something that is going very well for me, and use it to highlight other people's problems, people who could not have their voices heard. Those are the successes. The failures are easy; I have plenty of those along the way.

NDS: WHAT IS THE BEST ADVICE THAT WAS GIVEN TO YOU?

GC: Never mix wine and Vodka (he says with a little laugh) a lesson that I did not take to heart, that is why I can't donate my liver. All joking aside, I think I received the best advice from my aunt (singer Rosemarie Clooney) She sang a song called "Hey There" that's a really spectacularly beautiful song and as she got older it became more of a jazz song. Her advice to me was "don't wake up at 65 and say what you should have done, do it now." I like that piece of advice.

up, if it's a 6.00 am call, I'm going to get up at 4:30 and I'm going to work out, I'm going to keep up my stamina." That lasts for about a week and you go "I don't care" and you run out of energy to do that because it takes all your energy. Directing, in general, is answering a thousand questions a day and trying to solve problems. Then at the end of the day, you watch dailies. Because of the way I work I then go to the editing room to edit the scenes from the day before, so I have the scenes fresh in my head and put them back to back and have the film almost cut when we wrap. So I have a sense of what I have as a film. I try to not overeat and try not to drink too much, because you don't want to be hung over the next day and you don't want to put on 30 pounds while you're directing. There's always a craft service table that has the least healthy foods that you'll ever see in your life.

NDS: WHAT IS YOUR EXERCISE REGIME?

GC: I play basketball every day. Or, I have a bicycle that I ride or I have a gym in my house and I work out. I never had a trainer, that's never really been my thing, but I work out every day and I try to eat healthy and I do succeed at most times, and sometimes I fail. My way of thinking is everything in moderation, including moderation.

NDS: WHEN YOU LOOK BACK OVER YOUR CAREER AND YOUR LIFE, WHAT ARE THE THINGS THAT YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF AND LEAST PROUD OF?

GC: As an artist, you know I have been lucky enough to be in a few films that will last longer than an opening week-

5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



Delicious Breakfast

-- A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and

sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an internationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 7 a.m., patrons can now order 2

eggs any style, (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) toast and coffee with unlimited refills for the special introductory price of only \$3.99, or All-you-can-eat pancakes for \$6.99! A new plate called the "Home Run" comes with 2 eggs, bacon or sausage, 2 pancakes, toast & home fries - for only \$9.99! Best of all - unlimited coffee or tea - that is, refillable and never ending is only \$.79! Breakfast is served from 8am until noon. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (al-



most 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by

two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish at night; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district at now extra cost for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

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dio-apartments (max. 3 persons) and 17 luxurious apartments (max. 4 persons) with a loft.

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with stove top, refrigerator, toaster/oven and coffee maker (microwave optional). The apartments are air-conditioned, with daily maid service, private parking and a mini market.

The laundry is accessible to all guests 24 hours a day. There is a large fresh water swimming pool, with a pool deck and beach chairs, where you can relax any time of the day. At the reception, the friendly staff is always ready to attend you with a smile.

Quality Apartments is situated at the Schotlandstraat 70 in Oranjestad. For reservations or information readers may call at tel: (297)-583-0697 or (297)-583-7484, Fax: (297)-583-5203. Office hours are Monday thru Friday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

E-mail: quality@setarnet.aw, Website: <http://arubaqualityapartments.com>



LONDON (AFP) - Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, arrive with their son Prince George of Cambridge at Chapel Royal in St James's Palace in central London on Wednesday, ahead of the christening of the three month-old prince. Prince William and his wife Catherine gather close friends and family on Wednesday for the christening of their baby son Prince George, in a low-key ceremony far removed from the global hype surrounding their wedding.

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Baseball: Cards Craig could be thrust into DH role

BOSTON (AFP) - St. Louis' offence should get a boost from the return of infielder Allen Craig who is expected to take on the added role of designated hitter for the Cardinals in the World Series.

Craig finished the season hitting .315 overall with a team-leading 97 RBIs and a superb .457 batting average with runners in scoring position.

That would make him the ideal candidate for designated hitter in the first two games of the Major League Baseball's championship series which begins Wednesday at Fenway Park in Boston.

"We've gotten here as an offence doing what we do, and focusing on our approach," said Craig, who has not played since September 4 due to a fracture in his left foot. "We are just riding with that."

The current designated hitter system -- which was implemented in 1986 -- allows for designated hitters on both teams in the American League cities and no designated hitters in the National League city.

The 109th World Series pits the two teams with the best record in the MLB going head-to-head. Both teams finished first in their leagues with 97 wins and 65 losses.

Boston has won seven World Series titles but hasn't been victorious since sweeping the Colorado Rockies in 2007, while the Cardinals have won 11 crowns with their last coming just two years ago against the Texas Rangers.

Whoever wins this best-of-



seven set will have the most championship titles (three) over the last 10 MLB seasons.

Just three of the Cardinals have played before at Boston's historic Fenway Park which boasts a unique 11.33 metre (37 foot) high wall in left field dubbed the "Green Monster." There is nothing else like it in North American baseball and it can be a thorn in the side of visiting teams to Fenway, especially if their outfielders aren't familiar with the way the ball careens off it.

"The Green Monster is what it is," said Craig, who has never played at Fenway before. "It is out there and it can work to your benefit in some circumstances but it is not something we are going to try to take advantage of."

The Cardinals struggled at the plate in the National League Championship Series before beating the Los Angeles Dodgers in six games.

Even if the Cardinals don't win the 2013 World Series, nobody can say Carlos Beltran didn't pay his dues to get there.

Beltran, who has played 17 years in the majors, is hoping his first trip to the World Series is a successful one.

He can inflict damage from either side of the plate and is one of a trio of Cardinals who have saw action at Fenway before.

"During the regular season, we went through ups and downs and we stood together," said Beltran, who has driven in 12 runs for St. Louis in 11 post-season games. "We did it as a team, actually. It was fun just being able to watch the veteran guys try to help the younger guys -- being able to see the younger guys coming along and just coming here and do their job. It feels great."

Though he is hitting just .256 in the 2013 post-season, Beltran is arguably the best playoff hitter of his generation. In 45 career playoff games, he has 37 RBIs.

Beltran boasts a career .327 average at Fenway with four home runs. The other St. Louis players who have played there are catcher Yadier Molina and Matt Holliday who each have one home run at Fenway.

SPORTS

Baseball: Giants agree on 2-year Lincecum deal

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Right-handed hurler Tim Lincecum has agreed to a two-year deal worth a reported \$35 million with the San Francisco Giants.

The 2012 World Series-winning Giants said Tuesday the deal, which would keep the two-time Cy Young Award-winner in San Francisco through 2015, is pending a medical exam.

The San Francisco Chronicle

reported the contract is worth \$35 million, down from the two-year, \$40.5 million deal Lincecum inked in January 2012 after his fourth straight All-Star Game appearance.

Lincecum, 29, has won two World Series titles with the Giants, but his production has decreased the past two seasons.

However, he did toss the first no-hitter of his career in 2013, striking out 13 against the San Diego Padres on July 13.

Baseball: Price right fit for Reds

CINCINNATI (AFP) - The Cincinnati Reds Tuesday named Bryan Price their manager, giving their pitching coach of four seasons his first Major League managerial job.

Price will join the Padres' Bud Black and Boston's John Farrell -- whose Red Sox open the World Series against St. Louis on Wednesday -- as the only former pitching coaches managing in the majors.

"I couldn't be happier to be the next manager of the Cincinnati Reds," Price said. "It's been a heck of a ride to this point."

The Reds were in search of a successor to Dusty Baker, who was sacked after Cincinnati's loss to Pittsburgh in the National League wild card playoff game.

"I have spent a lot of time with Bryan since the season ended, and I was convinced

after the first meeting he is the right person to help us move this organization forward," Reds general manager Walt Jocketty said.

"We've all seen him work here with our pitching staff. He has proven himself to be an excellent communicator and leader, and clearly is one of the most respected people not only in our clubhouse but in baseball in general."

Price helped develop a Cincinnati pitching staff that had the fourth-best earned run average in the majors this season.

The Reds reached the playoffs three times in the last four seasons under Baker, but failed to win a playoff series after winning division titles in 2010 and 2012 before this season's one-game post-season loss to the Pirates.



Petrozavodsk (AFP) - A handout picture taken during the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic torch relay on October 22, 2013, and released by the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics Organizing Committee shows torchbearers joining their hands in Petrozavodsk, the capital of the northern Russian region of Karelia, some 686 km (426 miles) north of Moscow. Russian torchbearers has started this month the history's longest Olympic torch relay ahead of February's Winter Games in Sochi, which will take the flame across the country through all 83 of its regions, including extreme locales such as Chukotka, the remote region in Russia's Far East, the turbulent North Caucasus, and even Russia's European exclave Kaliningrad.



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Football: Bayern, PSG the biggest winners on good night for giants

PARIS (AFP) - Holders Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain were the biggest winners in the Champions League on Wednesday as Real Madrid and both Manchester clubs also recorded important victories.

Frenchman Franck Ribery scored a brace, including one from the penalty spot, while David Alaba, Bastian Schweinsteiger and Mario Goetze were also on target as Pep Guardiola's Bayern romped to a 5-0 home win against Czech champions Viktoria Pilsen, their eighth consecutive win in the competition.

The German outfit are three points clear at the top of Group D from Manchester City, the



Premier League club who claimed a potentially crucial 2-1 win at CSKA Moscow earlier in the day.

City had fallen behind on a difficult pitch at the Arena Khimki when Zoran Tosic lobbed Joe Hart, but Sergio Aguero netted twice before the interval to turn the game on its head.

That game was also marred by reports of racist chanting from the home sections of the stadium directed towards City's Ivorian midfielder Yaya Toure.

"It is unbelievable and very, very sad. We want to stop that and UEFA have to be strong, maybe close the stadium," Toure said.

PSG recorded their biggest European away win as they took Anderlecht apart in Brussels, Zlatan Ibrahimovic scoring four times and Edinson Cavani once in a 5-0 victory.

Ibrahimovic's evening featured a hat-trick in the space of 19 first-half minutes, with his third goal a ferocious volley from 30 yards that brought many of the home supporters to their feet. And he now has nine goals in his last four games in all competitions.

With Oscar Cardozo's late equaliser earning Benfica a 1-1 draw at home against Olympiakos in Group C's other, rain-hit, game, PSG are

now five points clear at the top and in a position to clinch qualification when they meet Anderlecht at home next.

Despite Ibrahimovic's feats, the competition's top scorer is Cristiano Ronaldo, who took his tally for the season to seven with a brace in Real Madrid's 2-1 win against Juventus at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Ronaldo opened the scoring in the fourth minute and then scored what proved to be the winner just before the half-hour mark following an equaliser by Juve's Spain striker Fernando Llorente.

Juve could not get back into the game after Giorgio Chiellini was sent off early in the second half, although Madrid captain Iker Casillas said the hosts struggled against the 10 men.

Carlo Ancelotti's side top Group B, while Juve are still without a win and lose second place to Galatasaray, for whom Felipe Melo, Wesley Sneijder and Didier Drogba all scored in a 3-1 victory over FC Copenhagen.

Meanwhile, Manchester United remain in control of Group A, if only just, after a second-minute own-goal by Inigo Martinez gave them a 1-0 home win against Real Sociedad at Old Trafford.

NBA: Owners approve change to finals format

NEW YORK CITY (AFP) - NBA owners approved a change to the format of the best-of-seven championship finals so the home and away sequence conforms with other rounds of the playoffs.

The league announced on Wednesday that owners voted unanimously to adopt a 2-2-1-1-1 format for the finals beginning with the upcoming 2013-14 season.

That's instead of the 2-3-2 system that has seen the team with home court advantage host the first two and, if necessary, last two games with the other team hosting games three, four and five.

The revised system, which was recommended by the league's competition committee, will allow an extra day between games six and seven.

Earlier rounds of the playoffs use the 2-2-1-1-1 sched-

ule, and the finals did, too, from 1957-1984.

The format was then changed to make for less onerous travel during the championship series, but NBA President of Basketball Operations Rod Thorn said improvements in air travel meant changing cities more frequently was now less of a burden.

Commissioner David Stern said there had been widespread feeling that it was unfair that the team with home court advantage by virtue of a better record going into the finals should have to play game five on the road if the series was tied at 2-2 through four games.

"It's not fair for the better team in terms of record to spend as many as eight days away from home," Stern said.

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Football: Spot on Ronaldo sees Real past Juventus



MADRID (AFP) - Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice as Real Madrid all but secured their place in the Champions League last 16 with a 2-1 win over Juventus at the Santiago Bernabeu on Wednesday.

The Portuguese had fired the hosts into a fourth minute lead with a tidy finish, but Juventus were level midway through the first-half when Fernando Llorente bundled home from close range.

Ronaldo took his tally to an incredible seven goals in just three Champions League games this season with a penalty five minutes later and Juve's task became even steeper when Giorgio Chiellini was sent-off just after the interval.

Gareth Bale was then introduced to make his home European debut for Real, but despite failing to make the most of their numerical advantage they held on to make it three wins from three in Group B.

Defeat however leaves the Italian champions in a perilous situation with just two points from three games, now two behind Galatasaray after they beat FC Copenhagen 3-1 in the other game in the group on Wednesday.

The return of Iker Casillas in goal was one of four changes that Real boss Carlo Ancelotti made to his side from the 2-0 win over Malaga at the weekend, but the Spanish captain showed no signs of rustiness as he parried away a fine drive by Claudio Marchisio inside the first two minutes.

Two minutes later and Madrid were in front as Angel Di Maria cut inside and slipped a perfect reverse ball in behind for Ronaldo to round Gianluigi Buffon and find the net from a narrow angle.

Juventus responded brilliantly to going behind though as they swarmed forward and Carlos Tevez saw two efforts from distance fly just off target.

And they were deservedly level on 22 minutes when

Casillas parried Paul Pogba's header at the end of a flowing move and Llorente swept home the rebound for just his second Juve goal since joining from Athletic Bilbao.

It took Madrid just seven minutes to edge back in front as referee Manuel Grate rightly awarded a penalty when Chiellini hauled down Sergio Ramos as the defender tried to get on the end of Di Maria's free-kick.

Bale was introduced for the much maligned Benzema with just under 25 minutes remaining, but the Welshman struggled to make any impact on the game and certainly didn't enhance his chances of starting when Real travel to face Barcelona in La Liga on Saturday.

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